

Message Text

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14

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 L-03 AID-20 TRSE-00

XMB-07 OPIC-12 OMB-01 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 DRC-01

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R 080839Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9547

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, ECON, THA

SUBJECT: NORTHROP CONTRACT FOR SECOND INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT

REF: BANGKOK 0325

BANGKOK 0184

1. UNCLASSIFIED. LOCAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS HAS CARRIED ARTICLES ON MEETING JANUARY 7 OF CABINET OFFICIALS WITH GROUP PROTESTING SECOND AIRPORT CONTRACT (REFTEL A). GENERAL THEME WAS THAT GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES WERE ON DEFENSIVE AND FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO ANSWER DETAILED CRITICISMS OF PROTESTORS WHO WERE DESCRIBED AS HAVING STUDIED CONTRACT IN DETAIL. NATION FOR JANUARY 8 CARRIED PHOTOGRAPH OF PM SANYA, BAREFOOTED AND IN HIS HOME, RECEIVING PROTESTING DELEGATION THAT ALLEGEDLY HAD FOUND INADEQUATE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS DEFENSE OF AIRPORT CONTRACT ON JANUARY 8. END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, WHO HAD PARTICIPATED IN THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY MEETING (REFTEL), TOLD ECON/CML. COUNSELOR IT HAD BEEN A FATIGUING FOUR
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HOOR MEETING. DESCRIBED IT AS NOT WORTHWHILE AND WITH

LITTLE OPPORTUNITY PROVIDED FOR EXPLANATIONS BY THOSE IN FAVOR OF THE CONTRACT, AMONG OTHER REASONS BECAUSE OF THE ANTI-CONTRACT BIAS OF THE CHAIRMAN. SECRETARY ALSO CONFIRMED THAT THE MEETING ON JANUARY 7 WITH CABINET REPRESENTATIVES HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED BY THE CABINET, AND THAT NEXT STEP WOULD BE FOR MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS CHALEE TO REPORT BACK TO THE CABINET. HE WAS NOT AWARE THAT PROTESTORS HAD BEEN RECEIVED BY PM IN HIS HOME BUT SAID LATTER PRACTICED UPON DOOR POLICY.

COMMENT: IN KEEPING WITH ITS APPROACH OF LETTING ALL VOICES BE HEARD, SANYA GOVERNMENT MAY REFER CONTRACT TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR REVIEW, AS STUDENTS AND OTHERS HAVE REQUESTED. IT WOULD STILL APPEAR UNLIKELY THAT THE CABINET WILL ABANDON THE PROJECT. IN ANY EVENT, THE NEXT ACTION STATE FOR THE PROJECT WILL NOT BE REACHED UNTIL END JANUARY BY WHICH TIME THE LOCAL JOINT VENTURE COMPANY (NORTHROP THAILAND AIRPORT COMPANY) MUST DEMONSTRATE IT HAS ADEQUATE FINANCING (REFTEL B) BEFORE FINAL CONTRACT CAN BE SIGNED WITH GOVERNMENT.
KINTNER

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30 JUN 2005

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